ASAM. CONST.
Arde I-1

OCTUBRE 30, 1934
5:00 p. m.

APERTURA DE LA SESION

Se abre la sesion a las 5:00 p. m., ocupando el estrado el Sr. Presidente, Hon. Claro M. Recto.

EL PRESIDENTE. Se abre la sesion.

DISPENSACION DE LA LECTURA DE LA LISTA DE DELEGADOS Y DEL ACTA.

SR. GRAFILO. Sr. Presidente.

EL PRESIDENTE. Sr. Delegado.

SR. GRAFILO. Pido que se dispensa la lectura de la lista de Delegados y del acta, y que se dé a esta por aprobada.

EL PRESIDENTE. Hay alguna objecion a la mocion? (Silencio). La Mesa no oye ninguna. Queda aprobada.

DESPACHO DE LOS ASUNTOS QUE ESTAN SOBRE LA MESA DEL SR. PRESIDENTE.

EL PRESIDENTE. Leanse los documentos recibidos.

EL OFICIAL DE ACTAS: (Insertense o veanse Acta. No. 77).

CONSIDERACION DEL PROYECTO DE RESOLUCION OTORGANDO EL SUFRAGIO A LOS VARONES SOLAMENTE (Continuacion)

EL PRESIDENTE. Esta en orden la continuacion de la discusion del Proyecto de Resolucion concediendo el sufragio a los varones solamente.

MOCION ABELLA. SU DESAPROBACION

SR. ABELLA. Sr. Presidente.

EL PRESIDENTE. Sr. Delegado.

SR. ABELLA. En vista de que ahy muchos oradores todavia sin poder hablar y quieren consumir su turno ya en favor o ya en contra, pido que se posponga la votacion de esta resolucion hasta el viernes qus viene. (Varios voces:No.) es que la Asamblea no tiene materia de que tratar.

EL PRESIDENTE. No hay ninguna orden especial fijando el dia de la votación. La orden especial es sobre el tiempo en que debe durar el debate y nada mas. En la sesión de anoche se enmendó la orden especial extendiendo el debate hasta el miercoles. El objeto d el petición de S. S. es entenderlo hasta el viernes el debate?

SR. ABELLA. Sí, señor.

MR. GRAGEDA. Mr. President, I object to the motion just pesented by the gentleman of Cmarines Sur (Mr. Abella.) This question was already decided by the Convention; besides this, the draft of the constitution is already finished, so there is no use extending the time for the votation of the resolution.

MR. ABELLA. But the Constitution will be submitted on Monday. What shall we do between now and Monday.....

EL PRESIDENTE. La Mesa va a someter a votación la moción del distinguido caballero por Camarines.

Los que estén confromes con la moción, que digan sí. (Varios Señores Delegados: Sí.) Los que no lo estén, que digan no. (Varios Señores Delegados: No.) Queda rechazada la mocion.

SR. ABELLA. División, señor Presidente.

EL PRESIDENTE. Los que estén conformes con la moción se servirán ponerse de pie. (Cuarenta y dos Delegados se lavantan.) Los que no lo estén, que se levanten también.) (Cuarenta y ocho delegados se ponen de pie.) Por cuarenta y dos votos afirmativos contra cuarenta y ocho negativos, se rechaza la moción.

SR. ABELLA. El primer orador de la noche en contra del proyecto de Resolución es el distinguido Caballero por Manila, Hon. Perfecto Gregorio.

EL PRESIDENTE. Tiene la palabra el Delegado por Manila.

DISCURSO DEL SR. PERFECTO EN CONTRA DEL PROYECTO DE RESOLUTION

EL SR. PERFECTO. Señor Presidente: Esta es la primara vez que hago uso de la palabra en una tribuna para hablar del sufragio femenino. Hubiera querido guardiar silencio, pero el tener de los discursos que se han pronunciado aqui, las ideas que se han vertido aqui, los prejuicios que se han aceptado como verdades inconfusas, me han obligado a decir unas cuantas palabras para que mi voz, aunque no sea más que la voz del desierto, puéda alarse en protesta anérgica y rotunda contra ciertas proposiciones e ideas que se han lazado aqui y que de ningún modo pueden honrar a nuestro pueblo.

Es necesario despejar prejuicios, es necesario disipar ilusiones para que nuestro pueblo no se extravie en el camino del progreso. Gracias a los prejuicios, gracias el error, la humanidad se ha estrancado muchos siglos. A los niños a quienes se les acostumbre a atemorizar con trasgos y duendes, con fastasmas y brujos, e sos pobres niños tardan más en qdquirir la mauoria de edad. Antes de que Colon se atreviera a cruzar el Atlantico, la humanidad estaba presa por el prejuicio de que la tierra es una planicie cuyos limites llegan a los lindes de lo infinito. Los navegantes no se atrevian a cruzar el Atlatico temiendo perderes en el abismo de los confines del mar; la humanidad creía que la tierra era algo a sí como una cosa inasmovible; la humanidad tardó en aceptar la teoría, de Galileo de que la tierra no es más que un planeta que gira alrededor del sol.

Señor Presidente: Se ha dicho a quí, que la politica es algo así como una cisterna encenagada, en donde no pueden zambullirse ni hombres ni mujeres sin encharcarse. Se ha dicho aquí que la pureza y la virtud de la mujer naufragaria, el dia en que se permitiese votar a las mujeres. Esto no es mas

que una ilusión; peron no es porque sea una ilusión me levanto aquí para oprotestar energicamente contra las insinuaciones que se derivan de ese prejuicio, sino porque parece que se hace creer que la virtud de nuestras mujeres es algo tan fragil que se quebraria con el mero contacto del sufragio. Es algo así como la miel que se diluiría al contacto de una gota de rocio. Pompa de jabón, que desaparecerían al monor soplo del halito. Es mas, parece que se da a entender que el campo masculino está integrado de sátiros; que los varones en nuestro pueblo tienen todavia los instintos desencadenados del hombre de las cavernas; parientes de la razas de Cumstat y de Cromagnon, que hasta que se les presente la oportunidad de que las mujeres vayan al precinto para votar, a fin de que los varones, como unos machos impulsivos, se aprestaran a saltar la pureza femenina, para rpetir en cada elección la escena del rapto de las sabinas. Hay la creencia de que el día en que las mujeres pudiesen votar, la elección se convertiría en una especie de bacanal. Si la virtud de nuestras mujeres fuese cosa tan fragil wue por elmero hecho de que pudiesan votar la tuviesanque perder, bien men gunda es esa virtud; es preferible perderla ya de una vez que no tratar de proteger una virtud mentida, porque una virtud que se destroza al menor contacto de una prueba, no es mas que un engaño, una ilusión.

No puedo menos de levantarme ahora para anunciar que las ideas vertidas en esta convención me han inducido a declarar, de una vez y claramente, que el sufragio femenino no puede poner en peligro la virtud de las mujeres filipinas. La virtud de las mujeres filipinas no es algo pasivo, no; es algo activo y militante que está puesta a prueba y en todo tiempo está a prueba para demostrar, que es algo de que debe honrarse la mujer Filipina. Si no, que digan esas doncellas que no obstante el hecho de que tienen entregado. . . .el corazon al novio, no pue-

den permitir la menor libertad al novio sin arrancar una navaja escondida y preparada para defender su honor. Para la mujer filipina es antes el honor que elamor,y si la virtud de la mujer filipina fuesa cosa tan frágil, como se ah hecho creer aqui, qué diríamos de la caballeros idad, de la dignidad, del sentido de honor de nuestros varones? No puede aceptar, no puedo aceptar que el sentido de caballerosidad de los varones haya desaparecido en Filipinas, para que nuestrasm mujeres por el mero hecho de ir al precinto para elegir a los hombre que hon de dirigir los negocios de nuestro gobierno, queden mal protegidas. Si las mujeres mismas no pueden protegerse, ahí estan los varones que están dispuestos a sacrificar sange y vida para mantener enhiesto el honor de la mujer filipina.

Y qué hay de la politíca? Es algo han sucia, tan turbia la politica que no puede ponerse en contacto con la mujer? Parece que se ha hecho creer a firios y Troyanos que la politica es esencialmente corrompida y corruptora. No se ha dicho ya aqui nada noble en favor de la politica, y sin embargo, señor Presidente, tengo para mí, que no hay actividad humana más noble, mas grande ay mas sublime que la actividad política. Hay algo mas noble y desinteresado que el servicio a la comunidad. Y esa es la política; servir a la comunidad, servir al estado. Si la política es algo tan corrompida y corruptora, como es que nuestro país. . . . .que esta desenvolviendo actualmente, sino tambien en el pasado, la mayor parte de esas personalidades se han destacado en las filas de la política.

Señores miembros de la Convención: Yo os invito a que recordais la paginas de la historia de otros pueblos y de nuestro pueblo; repasad esa s paginas y se encontrais una figura mas noble, mas pura, más digna de sier respetada por la humanidad que la figura del hijo de Calamba, yo quisiera saber quén es. Y, sin embargo, Rizal, que es el tipo más alto de la raza malaya, se ha destacada mas principalmente por sus actividades

politicas. Fué médico, fue artista, fue benefactor, fue un sabio, no es como médicomn no es co poeta, no es com escultor, no es como nosotros le rendimos homenaje a Rizal, no; sino porque Rizal, es, antes que nada, un politico que se ha sacrificado por nuestro pueblo, un político que ha sabido sacrificar tdo, honores, vida, para servir a su patria. No juzguenos la politica con la conducta de unos cuantos individuos que la prostituyen. Pocos probablemente de vosotros que me escuchais han emprendido campañas más agresivas contra la corrupción pólitica, contra la corrupción electoral, como el que tiene el honor de dirigiros la palabra. Pocos de vosotros han afrontado procesos criminales en los tribunales de justicia en aras de la pureza y la limpeza del sufragio; sin embargo, yo os digo que asiyo os digo que asi como en ningún tiempo he transigido con el fraude, puedo decirus muy alto que la política en Filipinas es algo que debe enorgullecer no solamente a los políticos sino también a todo nuestro pueblo.

EL SR. ALTAVAS. Señor Presidente, el plazo del orador ha terminado. ya.

SR. PRESIDENTE. Qué dice el Sr. Abella?

SR. ABELLA. Quisera conceder cinco minutos mas el caballero por Manila.

EL SRE. PERFECTO. AGRADEZCO A LOS CABALLEROS de esta convention esta oportunidad que me concede para terminar el concepto quee estaba desarrollando. Asi como hay profesionales que prostitutyen la profesión, que hacen de la profesión una mercancía, asi tambien hay políticos que no comprenden el alto sentido moral de la política. Pero no por que hay profesionales que prostituyan su profesión, se ha de despreciar la abogacía, la medicina, la ingeniería. Haya otividad más noble que la religion? Sin embargo, no sabeis que hay apostatas, que hay herejes, y no sabeis lo que se llama simonia? Pero no porque hay simonia, no porque haya habido apostatas y here-

jeshaya quien niegue nobleza y dignidad en las religiones. De igualmodo, señor Presidente, hay politicos que pueden abdicar de sus convicciones,hay quienen apostatan de sus principios, pero esos son a excepción. Aquél elector que, enfermo y debil, incapza de levantarse de la cama, hace esfuerzos para llegar al precinto, para cumplir el deber de ciudadano de votar, es un tipo que representa la generalidad de nuestros electores Tenemos electores corruptos, pero no son mas que una excepción. Asi es que, señor Presidente, al plantearse esta cuestión, se ha convertido en un reto a esta convención, Si rechazamos el sufragio feminino, eso quiere decir que realmente tenemos mucho miedo por la virtud denuestras mujeres, que la virtud e nuestras mujeres es algo tanfragil y que facilmente puede perderse, por el mero hecho de que puedan votar; pero si no han perdido esa virtud, porque se les ha dado oportunidad de comparecer ante los tribunales de justicia como abogada, de recorrer al pueblo para atender a sus pasientes, como médicos, y de servir en muchas y mil actividades humanas, por que la han de perder por elmero hecho de poder votar?

Asi es que yo patrocino el sufragio femeninio, porque creo que la virtud de la mujer filipina no puede peligrar por el sufragio femenino, ni permitirán los electores a que naufrague esa virtud y porque creo que la política es la actividad más noble a que puede consagrarse un ciudadano. He dicho. (aplausos.)

EL SR. ALTAVAS. Señor Presidente, el siguiente orador de parte de los propundadores del proyecto de resolution es el Delegado por Cebú, Sr. Carin.

EL PRESIDENTE. Tiene la palabra el Delegado por Cebú.

DISCURSO EN PRO. DEL SR. CARIN.

SR. CARIN. Mr. President, in rising.....

SPEECH OF MR. CARIN AGAINST WOMEN's SUFFRAGE.

MR. CARIN. Mr. President, and gentlemen of the Convention In rising to speak in favor the the resolution under debate, it is not my desire to cross swords with the ablest blades wh are championing the cause for womans suffrage; neither do I wish to be understood that I am an a rehed enemy against any cause or movement for the betterment and welfare of our women populationl On the contrary, in speaking in favor of the resolution bevore us, I feel that I am advocating a woman(s cause, not the woemn's cause for the preservation of her Filipina virtues and ideals, her cause to maintain her present exalted position in the Filipino home and society. If suffrage is only a bunch of flowers theimmaculate beauty of which would enhance the exquisite tenderness of a Filipina woman, if suffrage is only a crown of jewels which would add the brilliance of her femenine qualities and virtues, I wo ld be the first delegate who would gallantly prefer to women the right to vote, I would be the first troubador who will tender to her a song of her suffrage right as a sign that I am for a woman's cause if said cause will bring to her happiness and contentment.

But, Mr. President, those who are born and reared in politics know by actual experience what an electoral fight signifies; we, who have been participants in many political battles, managed electoral campaigns, heard political speeches, witnessed political intrigues and shemes, can vouchsafe with our own eyes how dangerous it is four our women to enter into the political strifes and swin into the boiling water of political wrangles and skirmishes. The verbal battle of calumnies, the mutual hurlings of insults, the scandalous vituperations and defamations which are usually resorted to by the candidates and their leaders inthe political arena to humiliate and eliminate their adversaries, are too risky, too unsightly, too fil-

thy for our women to participate. I am sure that every one of us is proud to be a Filipino, and to have been born in these blessed beautiful isles, not only because the pages of its history are replete with accounts of the marvelous deeds of its heroes, not only because it has produced martyrs and patriots who had willingly offered their lives for the denfense of their motherland, but also because the Filipina Woman, our fair sex that inhabit in it, is looked upon as thes weetest, the most delicate flower, the most adorable being for whoe welfare men have fought and perished.

What would be the direct result upon our women if they are huddled into the political arena? One of the surest and direct results is that, inthe heat of the s truggle, when passions surge high, when consideration of dignity and honor will be cast aside in order to vanquish the enemy, our woemn in politics will be pitilessly lampooned,subjected to calumnies, and other sorts of degradations, and instaead of being the flower whose exquisite tenderness is the object of our love and adoration they will become the miserable object of humiliations and pity, its petals no longer the immaculate whiteness of virtue, but are thrown on the ground, trampled upon by inconsiderate enemies, mutilated and disfigured in the mudo of politics.

And what whould be the result upon the home and family, if women are given the right of suffrage? Mr. President, one of the predious heritages from our ancestors of which we take pride of claim, is our family tradition--that solidarity of ou family institutions, and the harmony in our home,. The solidarity of family institutions, is the pilar which supports the stability of a nation. In the past as in the present, we consider our home as the proper sphere for our woemen, a place where the wife is crowned and worshipped as the queen. The duties and responsibilities of a good and dutiful wife are

centered in the home which she should dignify with the purity of her person one embellish it with untarnished honr and good name to command respect in the community. The entrance of our women into politics would mean the abadonment of the homes w ich every good wife is oblighed to preserve desrtion of the family which is the mission of every women to rear and take care of, the creation of unnecessary causes for family frictions and dissensions, thereby threatening the peace and harmony of the homes, the weakening of the solidarity of our family institutions which will eventually produce the breakdown, the dilapidation of th e family structure of our countryl Mr. President, it is my fervent wish, as it should be the ardent desire of te all patriotic Filipinos, that our present family institutions which constitute the solid rock supporting the stability of our nation, that our homes whicha re the depositary of all sublime virtues of good distinctive qualities of our race, sho ld be preserved intact, free from the impurities of imported ways of modernism.

Mr. President, the disastrous effect of women's suffrage will not only create havoc on Filipino woman's virtues and Filipino homes and families, but will also drain a good portion of money from our depleted treasury. If is admitted by the advocates of women's suffrage that the enfranchisement of our Women would mean an enormous increase not only of government expense in time of election but also of theexpense of the candidates. With the coming of the Philippine independence, there are manifold financial problems which the government will have to face, both during the transitory period and after a free and independent existence shall have beenac ieved. Delegate Marabut of Samr, in his able defense for unicameralism, has cited to us facts and figures tending to show conclusively that our government revenues will suffer considerable diminution during and after the r ansitory period, in view of

which a considerablenumber of delegates have voted fortethe supression of the upper chamber. We have agreed to discard the UPPER CHAMBER and to ado t unicameralism because it is believed that out government could not very well afford to maintain the luxury of a Senate during the transitory period, and yet we all know that bicameralism is an accepted principle in politi cal science the utility and davantage of which had been tested and proven for centuries. Some of those who had advocated for unicameralism for the s ake of economy are now the conspicous champions for the enfranchisement of our women which will double or treble not only the government election expenses but also the expenses of the candidates. The increase of government election expenses, if suffrage will be granted to women, will be more than enought to maintain the upper chamber which this Convention, has been fit to abolish for the sake of economy. And what is the practifal advantage of woman's suffrage to justify its adoption by this Convention in preference BICAMERALISM? I want this question answered especially by Delegate Abella of Camraines, Delegate Osias of Launion, and Delegate Bocar of Samr, who are the ardent advocates for the abolition of bicameralism for the sake of economy, but who are now the uncompromising paladins for women(s suffrage ntowithstanding its patently ignominious luxury. For, as for me, if we should take into consideration the undeniable fact that the husbands are the portavoces of their wives and the fathers, the spokesmen of their daughters, I could not see any practical advantage of women's ballots except that they are a mere duplication of the votes of their husbands, fathwrs, and brothers. If the granting of suffrage of women has any purpose at all, it is just to satisfy the vanity of few women leaders who are spinsters, widows, and wives who do not find happiness in their homes.

It is amusing tonote tat one of the salient arguments for women suffrage is that women(s entrance into politics would

tend to revolutionize the present day campaign methods and eliminate the present practices of political frauids and corruptions. They believe that, with their faminine charms and enchanting personality, they could effectively purge out the existing impuriteies of present day polities, bring about purified government officials and establish a better government architectured by feminine hands. It is illusory, not tp say highly preposterous, to claim that the intervention of women in the political whirlpool will result in the miraculous disappearance of personal mudslighings, mutual defemations, and seathing personalities which the candidates and their leaders usually adopt in their endeavor to bring their adversaries into disrepute, contempts, and public ridicule. No suffragist in the whole Philippines can mention MA any woman politician in any of the countrieswhere women are allowed the use of the ballots who might have started a cursade against corruptions and perfaned practices that go hand in hand with polities. Mrs. Josefa Llanes-Escoda, a prominent suffragist, in her article published in the Suandy Tribune of Agust 26, 1934, admitted that "to expect women--even the American women --to revolutionize a nation's political system with the ballot is to ask the impossible." . "hy should women be expected to achieve in a few years what men have been unable to accomplish in 150 years," she aids, speaking of American Polities. This admission belies the claim of some of her sisters and of the leaders of the negative side, that the entrance of women into polities will bring about healthy changes and innovations. In fact, Mr. Llanes-Escoda was right in her assertion, for if we take into account their natural modesty and shyness, their delicate refinement and meek disposition, women cannot be expected to accomplish a task of revolutionizing polities which is outside of their proper sphere of action. Instead of puri-

fying politics, they will be contaminated with its vices proven by quotations of Delegate from Palawan, dragged into the political turmoils where they will become the pitiful victims of the intriguing politicians.

The suffragists often claim that if women are granted the right to vote, they can work better in the adoption of social legislations, prevent the passage of discriminatory laws, and improve the laws which concern the women. This claim is femininely egoistic. It is not denied by any suffragist, that during the 36 years of its existence, our National Legislature which is composed of men, has passed and adopted many important social legislations witout the least initiative or intervention of any woman who arrogates to herself the title of "social worker," it is not shown by any advocate of women suffrage t that our legislator have tarnished their glorious careers as such by the passage of laws discriminatory of our women; neither is it proven that our legislators have been unmindful to improve the laws concerning the rights of women, because lately, laws amending the Civil Code have been passed to eliminate unjust provisions concerning theparapharnal properties of woemen. If that is the end sought by them in their demand to exercise the right of suffrage, then there is no necessity of granting it to them because it is properly attended to by our males legislators who, theoretically and practically speaking represents not only the male but also the female population. But, is it really true that they would work better for the adoption of s social legislations, fi they are granted the ballots? Mr. President, I contend that women can accomplish more results in the passage of social legislation without suffrage than with suffrage. Without suffrage, our social workers have free access to all warring parties. Their movements, views, and opinions will receive sysmpathetic attention from all political camps, because, without suffrage,they are not a party to any political

wrangles and animosities. They have no political enemies in both majority and minority parties, and all the solons are their friends, without distinction of political colors. So that, the social workers can easily approach any legislator to patronize any social legislation or any law concerning our women. While, if they are granted the right to vote, they will have to affiliate with the majorityor minority party, depending upon the party of their husbands, fathers, or relatives. The wives qnd children of the majority man, will have to affiliate with the majority party; and the wives and daughters of minority men will have to affiliate with the monority party. If t the social workers or women leaders ha pen to be in the monority party, they better stat home and care for their children, for they could not do anyt hing toward social legislation because partisanship and party spirit will not give them support. The result will be that the women will be divided among themselves there will be no concerted action on the part of women population concerning the passage of laws which affect their welfare and benefit, due to their animosities and party lines.

The clamor for women suffrage initiaged by a handful of women in Manila is based on the assertion that the women of today are the equal of emn in point of intellect, capacity, and talent. This argument is based on the erroneous assumption that the standard of education, the degree of culture, attained by the few women leaders who demand the right to vote, is the standard of education of the overwhelming majority of women residing in the hills and hamelets, mountains and villages of this country. Mr. President, while ti can be admitted that some of our women are already the peers of women who will be affected by the grant of suffrage are yet denied that degree of culture, that standard of education, which may entitle them to the exercise of a right which has been exclusively for men.

I know that the homely ways and custom of Maria Clara whose faminine virtues were the most beautiful songs and lines of our national heroes will obtain today among these overwhelming number of women populati n in the barrios and village who, conscious of their sacred duties and responsibilities as mothers and dutiful daugters, do not presumptiously claim equality and do not want suffrage. But, admitting that some of our women have already attained standard of education and culture to make them the equal of men, are there no other lines activities in which these developed talents, these acquired wisdom, of our women can be applied? Are the fields for women activities already so saturated that they have to overflow and enundate the fields designated for the activites of men? Gentlemen, the supposed wisdom and talent of some Filipino woman can vest be applied and utilized in sciences, arts, social welfare, works, and other activities agreeable to their sex and suited to their delicate nature and inherent sweetness of their being, which our Almighty God has been fit to embellish their feminine form. If the talents, widdoms, and developed abilities of a Filipino woman should be allowed to invade the realm of political strifes and struggles when men, in their eagerness to vaquish their enemies, are necessarily compelled to dissect the ugly, putrified items of her life and expose her to public ridicule and contempt, I will be the first one to construct a barrier in the form of constitutional precept to prevent the Filipino woman from going into the dangerous field of politics where her feminine endowments are desecrated and profaned. I THANK YOU.

SPEECH BY DELEGATE SEVILLA OF BULACAN

MR. SEVILLA. Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Convention: The qyestion of granting suffrage to Filipino women is probably one of the most extensively discussed subjects

that ever occupied the minds of our men and women alike. Schools, colleges and universities thave time and again chosen this topic as an untiring proposition for their debates. The press have commented, editorialized and dissected this subject from every conceivable aggle until all thinkable arguments for and against it have almost been exhausted. Fast legislatures hardly had any session wherein this perenial topic did not come up to demand their serious thought and attention. It is probably because women are so intertwined not only with our hearts, our thoughts and our sentiments but also being a part and parcel of our own verylives and beings, no question affecting them, in however a slight degree, can pass without men taking a solicitous and active part in its discussion and resolution.

When the last Philippine Legislature passed the Equal Suffrage Law enfranchising our women to exercise the right of suffrage by 1935, everybody, and I for one, thought of stumbling upon this question again until the committee on Suffrage of the constitution Convention rendered its report g granting the right of suffrage to men alone and erassing woment altogether from the picture. Hence, we are here again back to the discussion of the same old question.

The resolution, now under discussion says, "that the right of suffrage, under the constitution, shall be granted to male citizens only." One glance at this resolution and a sense of injustice will at once assail your conscience. We must bear in mind that we are gathered here not to legislate an ordinary law which may be changed or amended at any time by subsequent legislatures. We are called upon to frame and draft a constitution which, by its very nature, ought to be stable and enduring. No constitution is worth its name nor even the paper on which it is wiritten, whose provisions may be changed or altered as easily as any ordinary law. By the very nature of our task we are especially comitted ~~not~~ to

the principle of incorporating only in our fundamental law matters on an immutable nature and leaving out those which, because of the rapid changes and developments of the times, can best taken care of by the Legislatures. One of these matters, which can be properly left out in our Constitution is the question of enfranchisement of women suffrage.

The United States Congress is extending to us the Jones Law of August 29, 1916, which to up now is the Organic Law governing this country, wisely left to the discretion of the Philippine Legislature the question of determining the qualifications of voters including in it the right to determine whether women will eventually be enfranchised or not. This admirable flexibility of theprovisions of the Jojes Law regarding the qualifications of voters is a tribute to the prudence of the American Congress who knew how best to draft an organic law that can easily meet the adapt itself to the changing demands of progress and civilization. Congress in leaving the matter of women suffrage for the Legislature to decide, rightly forsaw that under the democratic government which it was then establishing in these islands, women will sooner or later voice their demands and get their shar in the determination of their political affairs. This foresight of American Congress was more than justified when finally the American Congress was more than justified when finally the Ninth Philippine Legislature passed Act 4112, and thus gave the much belated sanction to the clamor of our female population to be able to use the polls. And yet, Gentlemen of the Convention, this resolution under discussion would incorporate in our constitution the complete disbarment of our women to vote without as much as affording the Philippine Legislature, granting that it has erred in passing that law, a chance to correct and amend its own mistake.

All of us know how hard it is to amend a constitutional provision. It bakes years, decades and probably centuries to

secure an amendment ot q constitution. Right now, the Committee on Amendments of the Constitutional Convention has reported that amendments may only be proposed by a majority of the members of the Legislature or by a majority of the municipal councils and to be ratified by 2/3 of the electors voting at the ensuing general election. Urgent cases require 3/4 vote of the members of the Legislature and ratification by 2/3 vote of the municipal councils. Amendments are rejected if not ratified by the legislature before the expiration of its first regular session or by the municipal councils within one year after initiation or by the voters at the general election. This only shows, Mr. President, how difficult and almost impossible will bt be for us to correct our mistakes, if mistakes we might commit in this delicate task of drafting of our constitution.

If this resolution is passed, not only are we committing an injustice by denying suf frage to our women; not only are we wrecking and demolishing own a beautiful structure of political equality between men and women already built by our legislature after decades of painstaking anduntiring labors; not only are we dishonoring what injustice and in honor has laready become a law; but we are also condeming our women, perhaps, forever, to a perpetual status of political slavery. And what, may I ask, have our women done to deserve such a cruel and unusual punishment? Their only crime, if crime it is, is by begging of their brothers for something which will neither add nor detract to whatever rights he is or has already been enjouing. Their only sin, if sin it is, consists, in peacefully clamoring for what they honestly believe, is a privilege to be able to help and share with their men in exercising a socially useful task of choosing the officials that shall govern them for the simple reason they also form a part of the governed. But will they get if this resolution is passed? Without as much as giving thom a chance to a fair and impartial trial, they willbe convicted instead to suffer the pennalty of cadena per -

perpetua by constitutionally prohibiting them to exercise their right to use the ballot.

One of the prides of our democratic system of ogvernment is the constitutional guarantee in our Organic law that an accused person shall enjoy the right to be heard by himself and to have a public trial. Because of this guarantee, even the hardiest of criminals cannot be convicted of a crime without having his day in court and the benefit of an impartial trial. But with this resolution, women willnot only be derprived of the benefit of trail which the Philippine Legislature has already provided for them in 1925, but more than that she will be forever doomed to suffer political ignominy and oblivion. We glory and boast of the effective checks placed in our bill of rights against the excesses of the State whnever we see that a person is protected against a second jeopardy of punishment for the same offense, yet with this resolutionk coming as it does after thepassage off a law emancipating our women from their political sertitude, we are practically puting them of their opportunity touse the ballot box. Democracy! There can be no real Democracy in a country where only one class of the pupulation are privileged to choose the officlas that are to shaped the policies of the State, for I understand a democratic form of government to be one which derives all its powers from a great body of the society which compose it and not from an inconsiderable proportion or a favored class ofit. Equality? There can be no true equality in a country where men are supposed to be the only ones favored by divine right to assume the duties of government. Fraternity? There can be no genuine fraternity in a country where women are unjustly deprived from exercising one of the most sacred duties of critizenship.

Gentlemen of the Convention, let me now invite your attention to our election law and glance at its provisions regarding the disqualifications prescribed for voters. Section 432, says: The fo.

says: The following persons shall be disqualified from voting: 1. Any person who has been sentenced.....to suffer not less than 18 months of imprisonment....2. Those who have violated an oath of allegiance to the United States. 3. Insane and feeble minded persons. 4. Deaf-mutes who can not read and write etc... Gentlemen, I must confess that I can not read this sectionof our election law and remember at the same time thepresent political status of our women without my conscience rising in revolt. Just why our wives, mothers, daughters and sisters should also be disqualified to vote and placed in the same class as criminals, imbeciles, idiots and deaf-mute who can not read and write is beyond all comprehension and should merit the righteous domdemnation of any same thinking individual. Thanks to the last Philippine Legislature this anomalous situation of our women has been corrected. But if this resolution, now under discussion, is passed, we would again place our women in the outrageous position they were before. I therefore appeal to each and everyone of you to defeat this resolution if but to vindicate the integrity and the intelligence of Filipino womanhood.

The speakers who, up to now, have upheald affirmative side of the proposition centered their main objection to woman suffrage on the ground that family ties will be broken and hojes, disrupted. The lurid picture of abandoned families, the apalling description of destroyed homes painted before you by these speakers would even put toshame the senes of disaster and description wrought by th typhoon that recently hit Manila and the nearly provinces. It is strange indeed how a simple typhoon can stimulate the powers of divination and work hallucinations inthe imagination of man! If we would but calm our excitement, however, and view this question from a dispassionate angle, we will find out that theprospects are not altogether so terrifying as has been painted and described, I still

don't see how the mere exercise by our women of a simple right to vote which occurs but one day every abode. It would take more than mere words for anyone to convince me or anybody that such a thing would happen, should the female population of this country be extended the right of suffrage. At least, I can say that those who voted for me last July 10, 1934 have on that same day gone back to their farms to resume their work as if nothing has happened and as far as I know, no family ties were broken and hmo homes were destroyed. And I don't see any reason for hoistering a typhoon signal and getting alarmed if we would enfranchise our women.

Mr. President, in the constitution that we are to draft it is our duty not only to provide for the needs of the present but also for the demands of the future. It would be gambling too much on the fate of our Womanhood if we were to imprison their fundamental right to use the ballot in a constitutional precept, which, for all we know, may never be amended or repealed owing to the inherent difficulty of amending the Constitution. The Filipino women today stands onthe Threshold of a new and greater progressive life. She has, in the past, admirably kept pace with her brother in every phase of human endeavor. She has successfully answered the challenge and met the trying demands of progress and civilization. We cannot stem the tide of her advancing culture, even if we would, for as the mothers of our sons and daughers, we would also be putting a hindrance to the development and eduention of our children. If we believe that the passage of the equal Suffrage Law was a mistake on the part of the legislature, let us leave it alone to do its own correction. But in the name of Reason and Fairness, let not the Constitution which we are now drafting to symbolize the triumph of Philippine Liberty, be at the same time, a Calvary of Intolerance and Selfishemss where we would crucify and jeopardize the denstiny of our womanhood. That would be unfair, that would be unjust, that would be cowardly.

SR. ALTAVAS. Señor Presidente.

SR. PRESIDENTE. Señor Delegado.

SR. ALTARAS. El orador que va a seguir en el uso de la palabra para sostener la resolución es el Delegado por Cebú, Hon. Vicente Sotto.

SR. PRESIDENTE INTERINO. Tiene la palabra de Caballero por Cebú.

SR. SOTTO. (V). Señor Presidente, En el "Herald" de esta tarde he leido una información con este llamativo titulo: "Only Sixty of Two Hundred Two Delegates Back Women." Francamente confieso que, cuando leí la noticia, perdí las ganas de hablar aqui esta noche. Para qué hablar, si el triunfo de los Anti-Sufragistas ya está segurado? Ello equivaldría a empañarse en convencer el Convencido. (Risas.) Momentos despues, sin embargo, al ver el numeroso publico femenino aqui congregado, me decidí a hacer uso de la palabra, siquiera para que estas bellas y distinguidas damas se enteren de algunas razones, por las cuales nosotros, los Anti-Syfragistas, nos oponemos a incluir el derecho de la mujer al voto en la Constitución que se está redactando. (Espectación en el público)

He oido con verdadera delectación, Sr. Presidente, los himnos que aqui se han entonado a la mujer Filipina por los oradores que me precedieron en esta tribuna. Por ejemplo, he lido las filigranas literarias del Diputado zacarero Locsin. He oido tambien los inspirados versos del Diputado-poeta Bocar. No voy a seguirles por ese camino. La literatura a veces delita, pero no siempre convence aladversario. Todos los defensores del Sufragio Femenino han incurrido en el pecado de ser demasiado "teorizante," que diría el docto Diputado Palma. Olvidan que una cosa es la "teoria" y otra la "practica. Schiller dijo: "los hechos son mas elocuentes que las palabras." De ahi que me limite esta noche a aducir Hechos para convencer a los pocos que aun no estan convencidos, de que el Sufragio Fem

Femenino de e ser rechazado por esta Asamblea.

No hay duda, Sr. Presidente, que en el terreno de las teorias, o, mejor dicho, en el terreno de la discusión, los partidarios del Sufragio Femenino tienen argumentos contundentas. Por ejemplo, en contundente al argumento del diputado Osias de que el cincuenta por ciento de los Filipinos son mujeres, y si, al varon se le ha consedido el voto, no hay razon para que se le niegue a la mujer. Realmente, si lo que se llama "pueblo" es el xonjunto de habitantes de un pais, el pueblo filipino debe ser integrado no solamente por hombres, sino tambien por mujeres. Tambien es contundente el argumento aducido por una sufragista belga, que, invocando el principio democratico de "Obedense la ley que has hecho," preguntadba: "Como debemos obedecer unas leyes, en cuya confección no hemos intervenido?" Es, asimismo, contundente la respuesta de una sufragista francesa, cuando un diputado frances dijo: "Como quieren las mujeres igualdad de derechex, si ellas no pueden ser soldadeos?" Y la sufragista contestó: "Ejerito, señor Diputado, nosostros, las mujeres, no podemos ser soldados, pero nosotras hacemos los soldados." (Aplausos y Risas.) Pero todos estos arguemntos pueden ser refutados con el hecho de que las condiciones imperantes en los paises occidentales son muy distintas de las que predominan en el Oriente. En Filipinas, nuestras familias continúan aun bajo un regimen patriarcal, donde hay un "Cabesa de Famila" que ordena y manda, y todos le actan y obedecen. En el hogar filipino, un abuelo conserva su autoridad moral sobre sus hijos,nietos y biznietos hasta la muerte. Cuantas veces, nosotros,los qus hemos sido candidatos a spuestos electivos, para obtener los votos de los electores, hemos tenido que visitar al abuelo de una familia! (Apalusos y signos de asentimiento en el publico.) Aqui no hay mujeres ihdppendentis. Casi todas dependen del abuelo, padre, marido, tio, hermano o cuñado. Por qué y para qué han de redlamar el voto, si las mujeres ya estan débe

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estan debidamente representadas bajo el regimen patriarchal de nuestros hogares? (Aplausos.)

Hay un hecho que asalta a la vista, Sr. Presidente, y es que las mujeres del Pueblo el voto. Nuestor mujeres plebeyas no reclaman, ni necesitan el voto. No he sido de ningun mitin popular famenino en pro del suffagio. El siquiera he habido los llamados "banquestas de avnce" de qui qui habló la otta n noche el Diputado Abordo. Quienes comparecieron en las audeiencias publicas celebradas por el comite del Sufragion de esta Asamblea? Quienes estas ahora aqui haciendo acto de presentia y perfumando el ambiente de este augusto recinto? Ellas son pedagogas, medicas, abogadas,....Pero con certimiento digo que ninguna de ellas estenta la representacín popular femenina. Nadie de ellas este autorizada para llevar la voz del pueblo femenino. Entre ellas no veo a ninguna mujer del pueblo. (Aplausos en las filas anti-sufragistas.)

Señor Presidente, una de las razones alegadas por las distinguidas damas, que comparecieron ente un Comité de la Camara de Representates, para combatir la liberalización del Divorcio, es que ellas representan a las mujeres catolicas; que los catolicos forman una inmensa mayoria en esta pais; y que todos los catolicos se oponen a la medida legislativa en priyecto. Ahora voy a utilizar ese mismo argumento en apoyo de mi oposicion al sufragio femenino. Por lo pronto, dos prominentes compañeros de esta Asamblea, los Honorables Norberto Romualdez y José Maria Delgado, de cuyo sincero catolicismo nadie puede dudar, me han asegurado que las mujeres catolicas de Manila estan divididas en esta candente cuestion Esto en lo que respecta a esta captial. Si vamos a las islans del Sur, donde existe mayor nucleo de habitantes, vemos que los catolicos bisayos se oponen resultamente al voto femenino, a juzgar por las informaciones y editorialses que trae la prensa de quella region. Por ejemplo, "el precursor. " Aqui traigo un recorte de es

un recorte á este organo o portavoz de los catolifos de cebu, que dice asi:

En nuestro pais no hay problemas que resolver con la concesion de ese sufragio. Los derechos de nuestras mujeres estan sufficientements gárantázados en nuestras leyes y protehidos por el jefe de la familia. La unidad de idealse y la solidaridad de sentimientos son legendarios y tradicionales en el hogar de una familia Filipina. En todos los casos, la opinion del jefedes de familia representa la opinion de todos y cada uno de sus miembros. Todo lo sumo que se lograris con la consesion del sufragio a la mujer filipina es multiplizar el voted el jefe y otros miembros varones de su familia. O, si no, crear un mobivo para que la cisaña se meta de rondon en el hogar para sembar la desunion y la disolvencia de la cohesion y armonia que reinan entre los miembros de la familia " (Aplausos.)

Pero, señores, he ne temminado de leer elecditorial.

Ahora viene lo mas gordo. Escuchadme un instante: ✓

"Los habitos, las costumbres, la idiosincraxia y psilogia del pueblo filipino y el concepto que tenemos del amor, dé la Familia y del Hogar son muy distintos de la idea que los Americanos y otros pueblos aludidos por dicha dama, tienen sobre esas cosas. Una esposa americana puede decir con la mayor llaneza y frescura a su marido: I AM SORRY DARLING. I DONT LOVE YOU ANY LONGER. I LOVE RIM (señalado al tercero en discordia) AND I AM GOING TO MARRY HIM. Y el esposo, sin la menor turbacion, ni resentimiento, le contestar: ALL RIGHT BABY. YOU MAY HAVE YOUR DIVORCE. La esposa, que en Filipinas diga eso a su marido, no sobrevive el tiempo necesatio para decir Jesus, Maria y Jose" (Aplausos)prolongados y risas sonotas en las filas anti-sufragistas.).

SR. ABELLA. Sr. Presidente, para una cuestion de orden.

LA MESA. (Sr. Sandiko): Que dice el Caballero por Albay?

SR. ABELLA. Ha trascurrido el tiemp concedido al orador.

VARIOS DIPUTADOS: Que siga, que siga! Qhe hable media hora mas!

L A MESA (Sr. Sandiko): Puede el orador continuar.

SR. SOTTO. (Prosiguiendo). Emancipacion de la mujer Filipina! Bellas palabras! Pero, Sr. Presidente, que es lo que aqui se ha de emancipar, si la mujer filipina ya esta emancipada? No sola esta enamcipada, sino que es Reina del Hogar! (Aplausos). Aqui, por ejemplo, es muy corriente oir de un marido, a quien se propone algun negocio, esta contestacion: "Voy a consultar con mi mujer." Aqui la mujer es administradora y maneja los fondos del hogar. En China y Japon la mujer ni siquiera come en la mesa con el marido tiene

que servir al marido. Pero en filipinas, cuantos maridos estas dominados o controlados por sus mujeres! (Risas) No en balde somos el unico pueblo cristiano del Oriente, y el Cristianismo es incompatible con la esclavitud de la mujer.

Ahora, pregunto, Sr. Presidente, Suponiendo que concedamos el voto a la mujer, votara ella por conviccion o no? He ahi otro problema a resolver. Puede darse el caso de que un candidato "anti" tenga una esposa "pro". Permitira o tolerara el marido que su propisa esposa have propaganda por la candidatura de su propio contrincante y vote por este? No seria esto destruir la paz y la armonia de nuestros hogares? (Aplausos).

Hay que tener en cuenta otro hecho, Sr. Presidente, que surgiria automatiesmente de la inclusion de nuestras mujeres en el Censo Electoral, a saber: sera mas dificil para el pobre ser candidato a puestos electivos, porque se duplicaran los gastos. Aun prescindiendo de la compra de votos, hay gastos imprescindibles para todo candidato. Me refiero al trasporte y comida para los electors. Las elecciones de Diputados a la AsambleaConstituyente, por ejemplo, fueron las mas limpias que se han registrado en este pais. Prueba de lo que digo es que ninguna protesta se ha fundado en fraudes o compra de votos. Todas las protestas recibidas se basaban en la cuestion de residencia legal. Y, sin embargo, hay que admitir que nosotros, quien mas, quien menos, salvo raras excepciones, hemos gastado dinero en comida y tasporte de electores? Por que? Porque hemos llegado a un punto en que el elector no quiere bajar de su domicilio, si no ha de ir en autobus y comer fuera de casa. (Murmullos y signos de aprobacion en todos los sectores.) Pues bien, el dia en que las mujeres voten, creeis que ellas bajaran de sus casas, si no se les ha de tragar igual o mejor que a los hombres?

Deseo tambien llamar la atencion de esta Asamblea, Sr. Presidente, hacia el reciente caso de España. Por la religion

usos y costumbres, por nuestra convivencia de mas de tres siglos con los españoles, hay hucha afinidad entre españolas y filipinas. Vosotros recordareis que la Republica Española ha concedido el voto a la mujer. Que hizo la mujer española en las primeras elecciones en que tomo parte? Voto por los Enemigis de la Republica Española, colocando en el poder a los monarquicos disfrazados de republicanos. Hay mas todavia ni siquiera reeligio a la Diputada Clara Campoamor, autora del Proyecto de Ley del Sufragio Femenino en España! Consecuencia: España esta ahora en revolucion. Escarmentaremos en cabeza agena? No se repetira aqui la historia? (Aplausos).

Creo, Sr. Presidente, que debemos hâlar delgado en este asunto del sufragio femenino. Se trata de un nuevo experimento. No olvidais que, si cometemos un error, sera dificil rectificarlo a tiempo. Una Asamblea Constituyente se reune de higos a brevas. En cambio, si dejamos este asunto a la Legislatura Nacional, esta tendria las manos libres, y podria rectificar su error al siguiente año. De ahi que "The Dawn", revista portavoz de las damas aqui presentes, enseñando la oreja, dijo en reciento editorial:

"Let us hope that our Filipino leaders will respect and safeguard the woman's rights won during the American regime, writing them in the Constotution of our republic so that no legislature shall tamper with them in the future.

Se han percatado los Caballeros de la Asamblea de la frase "so that no legislature shall tamper with them in the future? (Murmullos en las galerias).

Que el movimiento femenino esta fracasando en el mundo, lo demostra, Sr. Presidente, la vida languida de la "Alianza Internacional para el sufragio femenino." Segun una moderna Enciclopedia mundial, se fundo en Washington el 14 de Febrero de 1902. La Alianza tiene por objeto obtener el sufragio y la eligibilidad para las mujeres en todos los paises, y unir a todas las partidarios del voto femenino del mundo entero en una organizaci'on eficas y fraternal. Fues

Bien: Esa sociedad edita ahora en Roterdam un boletin mensual, titulado "Jus Sufragii". redactado en ingles y frances y tiene solamente nuevecientos cuarenta suscriptores en todo el mundo. Si la circulacion de un periodico es el barometro de sux aceptacion por el publico, dicho se esta que una sociedad, cuyo organo oficial cuenta solamente con nuevecientos cuarenta suscripciones en todo el globo tarreaqueo, esta muerta o, por lo menos, moribunda. (Risas.

Voy a terminar, Sr. Presidente, invitando la atencion de esta Asamblea hacia dos hechos significativos. He observado que tanto las damas que comparecieron ante el Comite del Sufragio, como las que aqui estan presentes, casi todas tomaron parte activa en las pasadas campañas electoral en favor de la actual Oposicion.

VARIOS DELEGADOS. Que, que?

SR. SOTTO. En favor de los "pors."

VARIOS DIPUTADOS: No, no, no.

SR. CLARIN. A la prueba! Se pueden mencionar los nombres.

SR. SOTTO (Prosiguiendo. He observado tambien que casi todos los Diputados, que favorecen el sufragio femenino, militan en la actual Oposicion, o, mejor dicho, son "poros."

SR. SOTTO. (Prosiguiendo). Ante estos hechos significativos, Sr. Presidente, forzase es llegar a la conclusion de que al parecer, "los hombres que cayeron ahora caer sobre los hombres de la mujer filipina para volver al Poder." He terminado y muchas GRACIAS. (Ovacion delirante. Varios Diputados se levantan de sus asientos para felicitar al orador.

SR. ABELLA. El siguiente orador es el Delegado por Cebu.

EL VICE PRESIDENTE. Tiene la palabra el Delegado por Cebu.

MR. MONCADO (In Ingles. - Insert here.

(A las 6:47, el segundo Vice Presidente, cede la presidencia al Delegado Villanueva (H.).

MR. OSIAS. Will the gentleman suffer a little interruption? The gentleman has been reading an interesting citation, and from the delectation of the Assembly, I would request that copies be distributed to each and every member of this Assembly.

MR. MONCADO. Yes.

(Mr. Moncado reading a citation as follows: We have all seen not Adam .....

LEVANTAMIENTO DE LA SESION

SRL ALTAVAS. Sr. Presidente.

EL PRESIDENTE INTERINO. Señor Senador.

SR. ALTAVAS. Pido que se levante la sesion hasta mañana a las cuatro.

EL PRESIDENTE INTERINO. Hay alguna objecion a la mocion? (Silencio). La Mesa no oye ninguna. Queda aprobada.

Se levanta la sesion.

Eran las 7:05 p. m.